

been instrumental in building the Workforce Development Initiative, which brings together business and education in support of high school academics. What was once an organization only affiliated with business has now grown to include labor, education, health care, and nonprofit interests. In fact, the Contra Costa Council's scope has become so widespread, that it recently changed its official name to the East Bay Leadership Council.

Linda's spirit and energy is not only apparent in her work with the Council, but also encompasses her work with the many Boards on which she has served. Included in this long list are; the Board of Directors for John Muir Health, the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, the DVC Foundation, Opportunity Junction, the West Contra Costa Business Development Center, STAND for Families Free of Violence, and the United Way Leadership Council.

Throughout Linda's tenure, she earned many awards and distinctions, including the San Ramon Valley Chamber of Commerce "Woman of the Year Award," the Eugene O'Neill Foundation Open Gate Award, the Contra Costa Child Care Council Kiddie Award, and the Contra Costa Times Woman of Achievement Award for Business and Technology.

We invite our colleagues to join us in commending President & Chief Executive Officer Linda Best for her committed and diligent service to the citizens of Contra Costa County. We are pleased to congratulate Linda on an outstanding career and wish her the very best as she begins a well-deserved retirement.

HONORING THE TOWN OF MACHIAS, MAINE

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2013

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the town of Machias, Maine as it celebrates its 250th anniversary.

Located in the heart of Washington County and known as the "Blueberry Capital of the World," Machias is one of our state's most historic and picturesque communities. It serves as the county seat and is a regional center for Downeast Maine, with agricultural, commercial, and educational resources that are utilized and embraced by thousands of nearby Mainers.

The town was settled in 1763 and is home to the Burnham Tavern, a National Historic Site carefully maintained by members of the Hannah Weston Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. In 1775, Machias was the site of the first naval battle of the American Revolution. Author James Fenimore Cooper described the infamous battle and the capture of the English schooner HMS *Margaretta* in his *History Of The Navy Of The United States Of America*, as "the Lexington of the seas, for like that celebrated land conflict, it was a rising of the people against a regular force, was characterized by a long chase, a bloody struggle, and a triumph."

The residents of Machias embody the values of the hardworking people of Maine, and they may take great pride in the rich heritage they have created over the past 250 years. It is an honor and a privilege to represent the

people of Machias in Congress, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to help the town celebrate its 250th anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the people of Machias and wishing them well on this joyous occasion.

FEDERAL AGRICULTURE REFORM AND RISK MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1947) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes:

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Chair, I rise to speak in support of Jackson Lee Amendment #94, which will be in the en bloc for H.R. 1947, the "Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013." My thanks to Agriculture Committee Chair Frank D. Lucas and Ranking Member Collin C. Peterson for including the Jackson Lee Amendment in the en bloc.

I appreciate the work of Rules Committee Chair and Rules Committee members Congressman McGovern for managing the debate on amendments to H.R. 1947.

I offered amendments to H.R. 1947 for deliberation by the Rules Committee for approval for consideration by the Full House. Only one of my Amendments was made in order and will be included in the en bloc for the bill.

Jackson Lee #94 will be included in the en bloc and is a sense of Congress that the Federal Government should increase business opportunities for small businesses, black farmers, women and minority businesses.

Small farm businesses, black farmers, women and minority agriculture related businesses could benefit from partnerships with federal office location in receiving support for farmers markets. This would assist with eliminating food deserts, which are urban neighborhoods and rural towns without easy access to fresh, healthy and affordable food. These communities may have no food access or are served only by fast food restaurants and convenience stores.

Other Amendments, I request that the Rules Committee favorably consider included Amendment #1, the McGovern Amendment, which was joined by over 80 members of the House. This important amendment would have restored \$20.5 billion in cuts in SNAP funding by offsetting the Farm Risk Management Election Program and the Supplemental Coverage Option.

Jackson Lee Amendments not included in the Rule for the bill include:

Jackson Lee Amendment #182 was a sense of Congress that the Federal Government should increase financial support provided to urban community gardens and victory gardens to heighten awareness of nutrition.

The knowledge shared with urban dwellers can have a long term benefit to the health of our nation by increasing awareness regarding

the link between what we eat and health. This would also be a means of expanding the diet options for persons who live in areas where the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables can be prohibitive.

Jackson Lee #183 is a sense of the Congress regarding funding for nutrition program for disabled and older Americans. Accessible and affordable nutrition is especially important when dietary needs change or must accommodate life's changes. Older Americans and persons with disabilities often must live with restricted diets.

Jackson Lee Amendment #184 was a sense of the Congress that encourages food items being provided pursuant to the Federal school breakfast and school lunch program should be selected so as to reduce the incidence of juvenile obesity and to maximize nutritional value.

This amendment passed the House by a substantial margin in the 110th Congress by a recorded vote of 422 to 3. The inclusion of this amendment in the Rule for 1947 would affirm Congressional commitment to fight juvenile obesity and to maximize nutritional value. The amendment should have been made in order considering the epidemic of juvenile and adult obesity.

Finally, I sought support by the Rules Committee of an Amendment offered by Congresspersons Kildee, Fudge, Peters, Tim Ryan and Jackson Lee Amendment #53.

This amendment was not included in the final Rule for the bill. This amendment would have brought healthy food to those with limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables through a public-private partnership. It would increase funding for SNAP incentive programs for fresh fruits and vegetables by \$5 million per year, which is offset by decreasing the adjusted gross income limit for certain Title and Title II programs.

Food is not an option—it is a right that all people living in this nation must have to exist and to prosper. The \$20.5 billion cuts in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program also known as SNAP would remove 2 million Americans from this important food assistance program, and 210,000 children would lose access to free or reduced priced school meals.

The course of our nation's history led to changes in our economy first from agricultural, to industrial and now technological. These economic changes impacted the availability and affordability of food. Today our nation is still one of the wealthiest in the world, but we now have food deserts. A food desert is a place where access to food may not be available and certainly access to health sustaining food is not available.

The US Department of Agriculture defines a food desert as a "low-access community," where at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population live more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store. The USDA defines a food desert for rural communities as a census tract where the distance to a grocery store is more than 10 miles.

Food deserts exist in rural and urban areas and are spreading as a result fewer farms as well as fewer places to access fresh fruits, vegetables, proteins, and other foods as well as a poor economy.

The result of food deserts are increases in malnutrition and other health disparities that impact minority and low income communities in rural and urban areas. Health disparities